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ABSTRACT

Student services offices are often designed to react to crisis rather than plan interventions. This program is an innovative approach to academic advising for undecided or undeclared students. Overall, this program was developed on the basis of leading perspectives of student development--both personal development and epistemological development--and represents an attempt to address the needs of students in a coherent programming approach called "cluster programming." This cluster program is designed to assist all students to transition onto the campus, into a major, and finally into a career after graduation. Theoretical rationales provide the basis for descriptions of the manner in which programs need to be offered to address the personal development and the epistemological development of students. Perspectives addressed are: counseling, epistemological, freshman, and senior. An overview of the Student Development Center at the University of Nevada is offered. Appendices provide program summaries which outline the activities of each of the three programming venues within the Student Development Center: First Year Programs, Academic and Life/Career Counseling Program, and Senior Year Program. (JBJ)

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The Student Development Center:

Innovative Cluster Programming for Advising, Career Counseling and Placement for the University of Nevada, Reno

A paper presented in part at the

National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)

National Convention

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Abstract

This program description was presented in part at the national convention for NACADA, the National Academic Advising Association, as an example of an innovative approach to academic advising for undecided or undeclared students. Overall, this program was developed on the basis of leading perspectives of student development--both personal development and epistemological development--and represents an attempt of the University of Nevada, Reno to address the needs of its students in a coherent programming approach called "cluster programming". This cluster program is designed to assist all students to transition onto the campus, into a major, and finally, into a career after graduation.

I. INTRODUCTION

How do students acquire the skills they need to survive in a college campus environment? Professional skills are assumed to be acquired in the classroom; personal skills are assumed to be acquired outside of the classroom and/or in the student's home prior to his/her arrival on campus. But the reality of these assumptions is that, all too often, these basic survival skills are never developed. The traditional assessment of a student's survival skills has been "If the student doesn't cut it, then he/she shouldn't have been here." The reality of universities today makes this philosophy archaic and counter-productive, since it creates a perception that our students are disposable.

Much of the development of these survival skills is beyond the scope of student affairs; if what transpires in the classroom or in the student's home directly interferes with the student's developmental progress, he/she may access student services for intervention. However, this programmatic orientation leaves both students and student services professionals in a reactive mode; students are prone to wait for a problem to escalate to crisis level, then access services in a reaction to that crisis. This means that student service offices react to crisis rather than plan interventions. The difference in effectiveness between these two service philosophies is immense: people in crisis are not open to a broad examination of the behavior which lead to the crisis. At that time, the emotional resonance is too great, the pain too deep and acute, to allow time and space for the reflective process that precedes growth.

What follows is an examination of developmental and epistemological theory which provides support for a new "cluster" approach to service programming. This new cluster of

services, called the Student Development Programs at the University of Nevada, Reno, provides "cradle-to-the-grave" contact for all students: first year programs, academic and career counseling, and senior year programs.

II. THEORETICAL RATIONALE

Following are descriptions of the manner in which programs need to be offered to address the personal development and the epistemological development of students. The last two sections refer to the specific needs of incoming and graduating students.

Counseling Perspective

Student development is a term used by a variety of different entities in different institutions. From a variety of perspectives, the expression "student development" reflects an overall sensitivity to the needs of students who are striving toward adult expression of self-in-the-world.

From a counseling perspective, Chickering and others defined student development as the systematic progression toward greater levels of personal autonomy, congruence, and responsibility. Chickering and Reisser (1994) define seven vectors, or developmental tasks, which define the transition from adolescence into adulthood. These vectors involve developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. Each of these vectors describe progress toward mature, responsible adult participation in academic, work, and civic societies in a Eurocentric paradigm. While other cultures may vary

in the levels of each vector considered ideal for that culture, most cultures do share development of these competencies to some degree. In an educational institution, Chickering and Reisser describe:

> ...viewing student development programs and services from a student's point of view, as clusters of necessary functions in sequence. One cluster involves entering services -- ...employment, orientation, educational planning.... Supporting services assist students in moving through the institution and enrich their in-class experience with developmental cocurricular activities; they include ...career development, life and personal counseling, educational programming... Culminating services assist the students in the transition to work or further education; they include practica and internships, ... job search, resume-writing, interviewing, placement services.... (p. 438)

Chickering and Reisser's contention is that if programs are designed to address these seven vectors, significant progress toward maturation can be achieved. For example, orientation programs which develop activities on the basis of vectors of developing competence, developing purpose, and developing mature interpersonal relationships will a) encourage new students to define areas of academic strengths and weaknesses to reinforce study skill maturation; b) assist students in self- and major-exploration to articulate purpose; and c) provide a supportive environment sensitive to the separation anxiety many new students feel when moving out of the parental household for the first time. Academic and career counseling programs based on these vectors might assist in the refinement of career selection from the perspective of establishing identity -- an activity which is the antithesis of trait-and-factor matching based on marketplace statistics. Senior year programming sensitive to these vectors would emphasize developing job location and acquisition skills which will function to develop competence, purpose, and integrity.

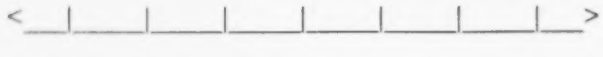
From a profession-wide perspective, the American College Personnel Association has

issued a statement on The Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs (1994) which states that "[t]he concepts of 'learning', 'personal development', and 'student development' are inextricably intertwined and inseparable" (p. 1). This overriding philosophical orientation is then translated into a description of the characteristics of a "learning-oriented student affairs division", including the point that "[s]tudent affairs professionals collaborate with other institutional agents and agencies to promote student learning and personal development" (p. 3). This means that the "functional silos" of fragmented administrative units need to be integrated and holistic, both within student affairs, within the campus as a whole, and within the community in which the campus is located to promote the "cumulative, mutually shaping processes" necessary for full integration of academic and personal experience. This counseling-oriented perspective gives direct support for the structure and goals of cluster programming.

Epistemological Perspective

From an epistemological perspective, Perry (1981), Kegan (1982), Golderberger, Clinchy, Belenky, and Tarule (1987), King and Kitchener (1994), and others defined student development as the systematic development of a sense of self as knower and learner in a progression toward greater levels of academic autonomy, congruence, and responsibility. Perry (who developed a schema for cognitive growth), Kegan (who described the evolution from a social self guided by rules of the surround to a self-authorizing self guided by rules from within), Golderberger, et al (who focused their work on women's ways of knowing), and King and Kitchener (who examined the intimate relationship between the learner and knowledge), all provide the consistent view that intellectual potential is maximized when the student moves from a dualistic, passive learner to a

dialectic, active participant in the learning process, becoming more tolerant of ambiguity in the search for one's own answers. This progression could be described in terms of a continuum, as follows:



Bad Good

Stage One: Dualism: awareness of **only the ends** of the continuum; looking for authority to provide Truth; black-and-white thinking.

Stage Two: Questioning dualism: **awareness of the shades** on the continuum; questioning multiple authorities with multiple Truths; beginning to see shades of gray.

Stage Three: Multiplicity: awareness of **only shades** on the continuum; all viewpoints are equally valid since no ultimate Truth exists; learning involves overwhelming ambiguity.

Stage Four: Contextual Relativism: awareness of the **entire continuum**; truth is relative to the context in which it is defined; learning involves being able to move into and out of contexts to articulate relative shades of personal truth.

Stage Five: Dialectism: **use of full continuum** and tolerance of intellectual ambiguity; ability to define and defend own intellectual discoveries; authority resides in the self-as-knower and ability to engage in procedures for testing own hypotheses.

Research into chronological maturation, educational attainment, and epistemological development (King & Kitchener, 1994) suggest that dualism is the most common mode of thinking when young people leave the high school environment; multiplicity is often the highest level of development at graduation from college; and that full dialectism is often not achieved until

graduation from graduate school. Given the individual development of students, these generalizations could be used as global directives for programming, but would not be assumed to be consistent at the individual level. These theories suggest that students entering the college environment at a freshman level might be more comfortable with highly structured programming, no structure at all would be frightening and frustrating. Conversely, rigid programmatic structure in the senior year would be considered insulting and limiting.

The importance of the integration of learning theory into student affairs work is undeniable. Fresh from institutional funding cuts in the 90's recession (Lively, 1994) and faced with uncertain funding in the future, student affairs professionals are increasingly challenged to document their contribution to the mission of the institution, usually described in terms of learning and persistence rates. In the Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs (American College Personnel Association, 1994), learning-oriented student affairs professionals are "experts on students, their environments, and teaching and learning processes" (p. 3). Implications for the future of student affairs work, therefore, would suggest that learning theory be integrated into program design and program content to maximize the developmental process of the student, and important rationale for the development of cluster programming.

The Freshman Perspective

The freshman experience has been the subject of many books, workshops, and studies. The most prolific and respected of these experts is John Gardner, whose Freshman Year Experience Institute has gained national prominence. According to Gardner and Barefoot (1994), the likelihood that the freshman year experience will be perceived as positive and hence likely to

increase persistence to graduation is contingent on several essential institutional behaviors. These behaviors are those which:

1. Provide the basic training for college, in study skills, institutional history, culture, systems;

2. Communicate dignity and respect as a rite of passage;

3. Guarantee a significant other, at least one person who cares if the student stays or leaves the campus;

4. Set deliberate goals for the freshman year and devise intentional strategies to help freshmen achieve those goals;

5. Spot the potential at-risk student and design interventions to assist that student;

6. Make positive predictions for student success;

7. Frontload resources to assist students to access essential services;

8. Address student expectations through assessment, then with that increased understanding, meet those expectations or assists students with revising those expectations;

9. Strive for a holistic approach to students;

10. Create a partnership between academics and student services on behalf of students;

11. Develop support groups;

12. Respond to students developmentally on their timetable;

13. Advocate on behalf of students and reward significant and meaningful work with freshmen.

In addition, Gardner and Barefoot identify the basic principles of student retention as,

among others, providing meaningful academic advisement, recognizing the critical role of orientation, providing academic and social integration, encouraging involvement on the campus, providing early career planning focusing especially on undecided students, recognizing the importance of academic skills, and programming on the basis of the relationship between part-time employment and persistance. All these principles are integated into the advising and first-year programs.

Empirical support for Gardner and Barefoot's work is found in Clarkson and Roscoe (1994), who researched factors which correlate with time-to-graduation. Factors which were found to be significantly related to graduation in four years were early planning of courseload, early academic advisement, and joining professional organizations. Among other recommendations based on the findings, the authors suggest "requiring early academic advisement of all entering students" and "referring students considering withdrawal from a course to personal or academic counseling" (p. 288), actions directly related to the goals of the Student Development programs at UNR.

A broader perspective on this student cohort was provided in the teleconference "Look Who's Coming to College: A New Understanding of Today's Students" (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators {NASPA}, 1994). Today's students tend to give high priority to personal satisfaction and relationships (suggesting high-touch in program delivery); value personal freedom (suggesting flexibility in program design); and are anxious about the future (suggesting the need for empowerment in program goals). In its description of new strategies for student affairs organizations and divisions based on this data, NASPA suggests that organizational

responsibilities be defined broadly, that territoriality be discouraged, that staff be encouraged to acquire broader knowledge, that organizational complexity be nurtured, and that innovation be encouraged. Cluster programming is consistent with those insights.

The Senior Perspective

According to Isaacson and Brown (1993), the National Career Development Guidelines of 1989 identify career competencies for adults as the abilities to a) identify self in terms of potential for work; b) assess self-defeating behaviors and reduce their impact on career decisions; c) relate educational preparation to career opportunities; d) develop skills for locating, evaluating, and interpreting information about career opportunities; e) develop skills required for seeking, obtaining, keeping, and advancing in a job; f) understand the impact of careers on individual and family life; and g) develop skills for articulating a comprehensive life/career plan. Further, these competencies are described as being most congruent with delivery programming in outreach activities, classroom instruction, counseling, assessment, career information, employer-senior contact, and in actual work experience, activities inherent to the Student Development Programs.

Further, the special stress and anxiety of graduating seniors cannot be overestimated. While many students do plan intentionally and proactively for their transition into the world beyond college, just as many postpone the inevitable as a means of denying the reality of their adult responsibilities. For all these students, the rite of passage out of the campus is the graduation ceremony. They must now go out into the world and present themselves as a professional; they must put to the test everything they learned in the past 4-6 years. Will they make it, or will they just be another college graduate working at a McDonalds or 7-Eleven? This

is truly the trial-by-fire for the graduating senior. Special sensitivity is required when working with these students.

The economic environment of Nevada represents a final element of consideration when evaluating programs for graduating seniors. According to Mike Clarke at the Nevada Employment Security Division (personal communication, November 8, 1994), Nevada has a great number of small employers who employ fewer than 20 employees. These organizations hire small numbers of professionals, but represent the most substantial opportunities for graduating seniors in the state. For senior year programming, traditional on-campus interviewing strategies will not be effective. Programming which assists the student to learn job-seeking skills outside traditional on-campus interviewing and empowers the student to pursue unique and creative career paths will assist students to transition out of the campus and into the workplace.

III. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Student Development Center at the University of Nevada is created from all these perspectives, with additional sensitivity to the intensely personal nature of the journey toward professional, personal and academic maturity. "Systematic" implies fixed and predictable transition points, but these theoretical, epistemological, population-focused perspectives are used only to define intervention points and to design programming which meets the developmental needs of the students.

There are three primary programming emphases in the Student Development Center, each with its unique contribution toward the development of autonomous, congruent, and responsible

members of the campus community and society at large. Orientation and first-year programs assist students to transition into the institution, to develop a sense of self as a "university student." Academic and career counseling programs assist students to transition into a major, to develop a sense of self as a "journalism student". Senior-year programs assist students to transition out of the institution into a professional existence, to develop a sense of self as a "journalist."

Further, each programming emphasis will have clearly articulated flow-points, in which students from one program will be handed into the next program in a coherent succession. Students will not "stumble into" programs. High needs, at-risk students will be identified at the intake from admissions and will receive targeted communication in concert with other student services offices. Orientation presentations will be designed to address those freshmen who are undeclared or undecided; sophomores and juniors will be targeted through the academic advisor and/or faculty; seniors as identified by credit completion will receive a mailing describing the Senior Year program and inviting them to participate.

Each of these programs involves a transition, an often stressful and uncomfortable period in which confusion and frustration reigns. For many students, stress causes them to entrench in old patterns of behavior which do not help them to successfully negotiate the transition. These students need help in dealing with the stress; once that task is complete, they are able to see more effective ways to work within the University. For students who are frustrated by the ambiguity of higher education, their task is to evolve their own answers. This "controlled floundering", experienced in a supportive, caring environment, can be transformative. For them, the most meaningful lesson they take with them is that they can find their own answers; this increases their

confidence in themselves as learning, growing human beings. The key to helping all these students successfully move through these nodal transitions is to provide the support they need to experiment with new ways of seeing themselves, while simultaneously challenging them to find new ways of externalizing that new self-image.

These insights are the foundation of programming in the Center. In order to increase the likelihood that students will succeed at the University of Nevada, Reno, the Student Development Center will eventually assist every student. With expanded Orientation programs and options, every new freshman is currently required to attend an orientation session; all new transfer students will have the same requirement in the near future. Academic and career counseling and Core Curriculum (general education) information will be provided for those students who are unable to articulate a school, college, or major affiliation; whose GPA is below that required by the major of choice; whose access to the major of choice is limited by enrollment caps; or who wants to change majors but is not sure of his/her academic destination. Finally, the senior-year programs will assist students to develop career seeking skills and to access opportunities in their profession of choice.

As a clearinghouse of information for students, the Student Development Center also functions to help students navigate the University system. Referrals are made to advisors, counselors, and other faculty and staff as needed. The goal is to provide an environment in which there are no stupid questions, where the focus will be to help students function autonomously and responsibly in the search for academic, professional, and personal answers.

Following the reference page, program summaries are attached which outline the activities of each of the three programming venues within the Student Development Center.

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STUDENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER
INTAKE PROCESS

Purpose: To ensure that the Student Development Center responds in a "user" friendly manner. The initial contact with a student must be conducted in a knowledgeable and accurate manner. It should be considered an individual counseling service. The Initial Intake process will ensure that the student is directed to the proper resource or program and provide student utilization data and demographics.

Due to the complex nature of student concerns and varied programs offered, the staff responsible for the intake process should be professionals or interns who are well trained in all aspects of the programs. An accurate and timely intake will eliminate the long waits for appointments which increases the risk of no shows and cancellations. More accurate scheduling will eliminate a potential waste of professionals' time and lower the frustration of the students. Many concerns of students can be responded to immediately within the intake conversation.

The provision of intake counseling can be rotated among professionals and interns. Specific hours can be designated as walk-in intake times or intake can be done over the phone.

A. Initial Intake for First Year Students:

1. Freshman

a. Declared: Refer to department with adviser name.
How to contact adviser sheet.
Data collected:
Contact Made
Referral

b. Undeclared: Sign up for the ACE program
Data collected:
Contact Made
ACE Referral

2. Transfer

a. Undeclared:
Academic Audit through Susie (summary sheet for best/most timely choices)
Refer to ACE (less than 15)
Refer to Counseling (15+)

B. Intake for Students Requesting " Counseling"

The Intake process is necessary to clarify the student's real concern. Frequently lack of clarification leads to long waiting lists for counseling appointments when other interventions would be more appropriate and timely.

1. First Year: See A above

2. Major Change/ Choice - Complete Intake
   Provide homework and schedule counseling appt.
   Refer and Get - Academic Audit
   Data Collection: Intake for demographics and concern.
   Note counseling referral.

   a. Changed mind
   b. Not eligible for 1st choice
   c. Undeclared transfer - 15+ credits
   d. Undeclared/Non degree - 30 + credits

3. What to do with Major? - Complete Intake.
   Provide information homework
   Schedule counseling appointment
   Data Collection: Intake for demographics and concern
   Note information provided
   Note counseling referral.

4. Alumni/ae - Complete Intake
   a. Recareering
   b. Return to School - graduate School
   c. Job Search Assistance - To Sr Year Job Search

   Data Collection: Intake for demographics and concern
   Note Counseling or Sr Year Referral

5. Non-Students - Complete Intake/ Note if Referral
   Not Referred:
   Mail outline of non-student services
   Referrals:
   Have counselor call for Phone Intake to determine concern:
   Counseling Issues - three part process
   Job Search - Workshop Schedule and Information

6. Continuing Clients or Other Concerns - Complete intake
   Note call and indicate counseling appointment.

C. Follow up on the Initial Intake:

1. Create a data file on each student based on the Social Security Number.
   Note demographics of student.
   Note initial career concern.

2. Note dispensation of student:
   - First Year
   - Information and Co Apt.
   - Homework and Co Apt.
   - Career Assessment
   - Referrals
   - Academic Audits

3. This file will be used to log in the actual services received.

   To build responsibility, the no-shows of the student will also be noted. This will reflect on students progress and influence the scheduling log jam.

FIRST YEAR PROGRAMS SUMMARY
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

VARIOUS COMPONENTS:

A) Selected recruitment events

B) National Student Exchange Program

C) Orientation Programs & Related Activities
- **+ Soar and Off To College sessions - Reno & Las Vegas (Student and family member programs)**
- **+ Student Orientation Staff (SOS)**
- **+ Freshman Forums**
- **+ Parents Association**
- **+ Special population orientation**
- **+ Orientation related special events**

D) ACE Program

A) Selected recruitment events

- **-Serve as representative for orientation and first year programs area at UNR Fall Previews (Fall Semester)**
- **-Coordinate the VIP Basketball Program for President (October through March)**
- **-Serve as guest speaker at selected high schools covering a variety of "preparing for college" topics (Fall and Spring semesters)**

B) National Student Exchange Program

The National Student Exchange (NSE) is a program which allows qualified students to spend one or two semesters at another member school during their Sophomore or Junior year. The orientation office has served as a logical "home base" for the program on our campus for two reasons: It makes great sense to promote it at orientation sessions so that students can begin planning; the NSE students who come here from other schools are "new students" and need a somewhat specialized orientation to our campus and the Reno area.

NSE activities occur on a year-round basis, serving both the incoming and outgoing students. Applications are accepted December 1 through March 1, for participation during the following academic year.

Funding for this program (including required travel to placement conference) comes from the Vice-President for Student Services. Currently, the orientation director serves as the campus NSE Coordinator and the orientation program assistant services as Assistant coordinator.

C) Orientation Programs & Related Activities

+ New Student Orientation Sessions (Reno & Las Vegas)
  - Held April through August and January of each year
  - Required of all new freshmen and transfers with less than 15 credits
  - Possible requirement for all transfers in near future

+ Student Orientation Staff (SOS)
  - Undergraduate student group who volunteer on a year-round basis with orientation and related activities
  - Involved with Parents Weekend and sponsor Survival Sack Program each semester
  - All new members required to complete a 10 week leadership class taught by Orientation director each spring
  - All members attend monthly meetings and several training retreats each year

+ Freshman Forum
  - Retention Program co-sponsored with Academic Affairs
  - Students must attend SOAR sessions(April through June) receive advisement in order to be eligible to participate in Forums
  - Student Services and Orientation are primary promoters of Forum; also responsible for coordinating discussion groups and leaders

+ Parents Association
  - Optional programs for parents of undergrads to help keep them "connected" with their student and the University
  - Parents may join at different "levels" which allows the different benefits
  - Key features/activities include newsletters, Parents Weekend, receptions/programs in Reno, Las Vegas and other locations to come, Parents Panels at Orientation
  - Plan to network more with Alumni office for future activities and sharing of resources

+ Special Population Orientation
  - Student Athletes (You-Win Workshop)
  - RAP Students
  - Japanese Students (Reno & Tokyo)
  - Hughes Scholarship students
  - Logistics Mgt. Summer Program Students
  - GSA Training
  - TMCC/WNCC "Discover UNR" program
  - Summer Session Students

+ Orientation Related Special Events/Activities
  - New Student Convocation
  - Information Fair
  - Develop/revise publications for all orientation needs
  - Supervise graduate assistant in area of orientation/new student program

D. ACE Program

The Academic and Career Exploration (ACE) Program is being designed to serve first year students who are completely undecided on a major or area of interest. The program is available to brand new freshmen and transfer students with less than 15 credits; students can participate in ACE for a maximum of two semesters. The basic premise is to provide undecided freshmen with a structured program that will focus on several career exploration activities, appropriate academic advisement, exposure to interest inventories/learning styles assessments and other avenues which will lead to the declaration of a major by the end of the second semester.

Specific details of the ACE program include:

- Students who meet the March 1 deadline are eligible (no late admits)

- Project Call Back representative determines who <u>really</u> is an undecided student; works with Admissions to correct errors

- All truly undecided students sent a letter of welcome to ACE program with explanation of ACE and the requirements/expectations of participants

- Students need to send back ACE confirmation card by June 1, noting date to attend orientation: if not participating, they <u>must</u> affiliate with an academic college (Project Call Back rep. can assist if needed)

- ACE meetings will be held at each orientation session where academic advising/ information will be presented and individual student contracts will be reviewed and signed. The contracts will specify the required activities for

the incoming semester such as: completion of Kersey-Bates learning style inventory, library research assignments, interviews with faculty or appropriate community members, attendance at Career Fair or similar events, participation in Freshman Forum and/or CEP 122 or 123 class, scheduled meetings with ACE program coordinator. Failure to complete activities on contract by designated deadlines will result in a hold on registration for the next semester. An evaluation form will be completed for feedback to the Student Development Center.

- If student is ready to declare a major or affiliate with a college, they will be referred to an advisor (with an ACE referral card). A copy of the change of major form will be required and kept in their ACE file.

- Should a student wish to continue for the second semester, a new contract will be prepared to include activities such as: Further testing with appropriate inventories, 2-3 "shadowing experiences" in various settings/environments of potential interest (with a paper to be a written after each experience), any additional interviews/research which will lead to the declaration of a major by the end of the semester. Once again, failure to meet the terms of the contract will result in a hold on registration for the next semester. An evaluation form will be provided for feedback.

- The student will be referred to an advisor (with an ACE referral card); a copy of the change of major form will be kept in their ACE file. There is a two semester maximum on the ACE program - the student needs to at least affiliate with a Academic College at the time.

- Student who matriculate in January would still have the opportunity to participate in the ACE program and would be required to follow the same general guidelines as noted above.

ACADEMIC AND LIFE/CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM

I. Philosophy and Mission

The foundation of student development is counseling. The Academic and Life/Career Counseling Program provides the process and interventions that support the developmental transitions that occur between the First Year Programs and those that support the transition out of the university, Senior Year Programs. Additionally, the program supports the need for lifelong learning and professional development and may be accessed by alumni/ae, employees of the university and re-entry members of the community in their life/career transitions.

II. Developmental Transitions

A. Cognitive Complexity

The area of academic and career decision making provides many opportunities to challenge less complex thinking. Many students (of all ages) and their families cling to "dualistic" notions about career development and choices. This cognitive framework must be assessed and acknowledged by the counselor. The timing and delivery of meaningful and growth producing interventions will be impacted by the amount of resistance and anxiety experienced by the student. The career myths that predominate perceptions of career decision making ("career choice is a one shot and one time deal" or "someone or some test will know and tell me what to do") strongly influence client expectations of themselves and the academic and career counseling process. These notions directly impact students' willingness to engage in a thorough process of self assessment and career exploration. Consequently, they attempt to make decisions with limited information (opinions of family and friends) or avoid decisions by waiting for a "flash of lightening" which will again "tell" them what to do. This history or style of depending on authorities in making decisions heightens anxiety, loss of self-esteem as "there is something wrong with me", depression and anger.

One goal of academic and life/career counseling is increasing career maturity: the development of more mature levels of thinking about and planning for a career. This development is demonstrated by the ability to acquire accurate information about job opportunities, training requirements and financial returns, to formulate career plans and to reach a degree of certainty about one's career choice.

B. Chickering's Vectors

Academic and life/career counseling provides the support and challenges which enhance the development of all vectors. In particular, it can enhance those vectors of developing competency, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdepence, establishing identity and developing purpose.

1. Developing Competence

   Life/career and academic counseling builds on the strengths of students. To accomplish this, the student must evaluate and acknowledge his/her abilities and skills. This enables the student to perceive him/herself in a positive / competent light and to access these skills with self-awareness and self-confidence. Additionally, it reveals to the student those available coping skills for managing transitions.

   Many potential "major changers" are experiencing challenges to intellectual competency. Reentry and transfer students often find the academic environment threatening. Academic/Career counseling can explore these feelings of inadequacy and discuss possible campus resources to enhance success.

   Developing plans for "experiential learning" or involvement in campus activities promotes the development of competency. The use of a developmental transcript enables students to document their growth in a variety of skill areas.

2. Managing Emotions

   The process of career/academic counseling frequently assists students in learning how to manage emotions. Students in the midst of academic and career indecision frequently experience fear and anxiety, anger, depression, guilt and shame. These emotions may exacerbate the sense of crisis and/or may result from the desire to make or reevaluate an earlier decision.
   Counseling enables students to examine fears of failure and depression over loss of their or parents' dreams.
   Family history often leads to understanding emotional reactions.

   Frequently chronic worriers and perfectionists have major blocks to decision making. Similar to dualistic thinkers, they are stuck seeking the "perfect" choice.

3. Moving through Autonomy Toward Interdepence

Academic and life/career counseling can enhance the process of individuation whereby a student becomes one's own person and is increasingly responsible for self-support.

Emotional independence can be strengthened through the processes of choosing, deciding, deliberating, planning and evaluating which are integral to career development. It is strengthened by assisting the student to gain freedom from the need for reassurance, affection and approval from others. The process of clarifying one's values, interests and personal style as distinct from those of others enhances the sense of confidence and determination to "find one's own way".

Instrumental independence can be enhanced by encouraging students to participate in a variety of activities and experiential learning programs. These experiences provide the opportunity to act in a self-directed manner. The strengthening of problem solving abilities leads to the a greater sense of independence. Many students have doubts about surviving away from home or Reno. Exchange programs, internships and travel help students believe that they can survive change and function well. This freedom increases a student's tolerance of ambiguity and ability to risk in the face of uncertainty.

Interdependence is enhanced by involvement in community service activities, campus groups, and volunteering. These activities are all encouraged as part of exploring and testing the reality of careers.

4. Establishing Identity

Both self-concept and self-esteem are enhanced by developing a future direction and plan. The counseling assists the student in developing a sense of self as a student and future community member. Vocational identity is frequently a critical element in a student's perception of "who I am".

5. Developing Purpose

The intended outcome of academic and career counseling - the formulation of plans which integrate (1)vocational plans and aspirations, (2) personal interests,(3) interpersonal and family

commitments is the benchmark of developing purpose. This outcome is enhanced in students who participate in career exploration counseling and activities. The major step in developing purpose is the clarifying of personal interests and values which is an initial step in academic and career counseling.

III. Outline of Counseling Concerns

The following general descriptions attempt to identify the concerns presented by the clients. However, it must be recognized that these academic and life/career concerns do not present themselves in a vacuum. The are interwoven with many developmental concerns and must be explored within a developmental framework.

A. Students needing to clarify or re-visit decisions concerning choice of major or field of study.

1. Undergraduates with 15+ Credits:
   Major Reevaluation or Major Change

2. Undeclared/Nondegree Undergraduates with 15+ Credits
   Major Choice

3. Undergraduate with 60+ Credits:
   Not Eligible for 1st Major
   Changed Mind About Major

4. Undeclared Transfer with 15+ Credits
   Major Choice

B. Clients in life transitions involving career changes or gaining additional education.

1. Students Returning after a lengthy absence

2. Alumni/ae
   Career Change
   Managing Transitions
   Graduate School Option
   Job Seeking Skills - Senior Year

3. Faculty and Staff Career Counseling
   Enhancing the professional development of faculty
   Maximizing the opportunity to attend classes

Support life/career transitions
A form of EAP

4. Non-Students - Self Referred

5. Referrals from Community Counselors

C. Students / Alumni/ae with Other Constraints and Barriers Interfering with Satisfactory Academic and Career Progress

IV. Academic and Life / Career Counseling Process

The process of Academic and Life/Career Counseling varies for each client. It is not possible to outline a counseling process that will be applied to each client. There are some elements that should be included in the process:

A. Client Expectations

It is very important to clarify the active role the client must take in the career development process. The reality that decisions about careers involve interweaving experience and information over time must be understood. Clients must be led to realize that these answers cannot be provided to them.

All clients should be assured of confidentiality and should give written permission for sharing of information to other counselors or offices such as: academic audit, disability counseling, student support services, internship center.

B. Self-Assessment

Clients should be supported in the process of assessing various aspects of their life and personality which will impact their career development:

- **Family History and Themes**
- **Life Experiences (school and work)**
- **Interests**
- **Values**
- **Personality Type**
- **Learning Style**
- **Demonstrated Abilities**
- **Life Style Desires**
- **Decision Making Style**
- **Constraints or Barriers**
- **Gender or Ethnic Challenges**

C. Academic Audit

Many students need to include information on their academic progress in the decision making process. An academic audit

should be included through collaboration with an academic consultant or transfer counselor. This may include an evaluation of how their current credits will support various major programs.

D. Career Information Resources

Clients should be provided with various informational resources that match their preferred learning style. They should be encouraged to develop a research plan utilizing the career library, faculty, informational interviews and experience.

E. Reality Testing

Clients should be encouraged to test their options through a plan to reality test them through:

- Campus Activities / Groups
- Job Shadowing
- Part Time Work
- Volunteering
- Internships

F. Decision Making and Goal Setting

Clients should be supported in their decision making through anxiety reducing interventions which encourage the understanding that career decision making is not a one time event.
Clients should be encouraged to utilize both rational/linear and subjective/ cyclical decision making processes.

G. Education and Career Planning

At each decision point in the counseling process, the student should prepare a statement of goals and activities to complete for accomplishment.

H. Reevaluation

Clients should be encouraged to continually stay open to additional experience and information that will impact their decisions. Counseling may involve periodic discussions as clients move through the career development process. At each phase, plans should be reevaluated and, if necessary, rewritten.

V. Program Components

In the Handbook for the College and University Career Center (Herr, Rayman, & Garis, 1993), the role of individual counseling is considered the *primary* counseling service and the image of a career center should be that of a counseling center. Although some counseling elements may be provided in group-based

programmatic services, it is imperative that the center maintain the ability to respond to clients on an individual basis.

A. Counseling Intake Packet

Handout to be completed prior to Counseling Appointment: Given in person or mailed to non-students for inclusion in the individual session. The purpose of the handout is to encourage the thought processes necessary to make the counseling appointment more productive. It will cover the steps of the career development process, questions on client history, clarification of client concern and the responsibilities of counselors and clients in the process. It will stress the responsibility to come to appointments prepared and to keep appointments as scheduled.It will include a strong statement on "no-shows".

B. Initial Counseling Session

The initial counseling session forms the foundation on which all remaining sessions will build. This session should focus on client goal or problem identification, clarification and specification. This session will build on the Pre-session handout.

*Opening

1. Identify the goal or problem
2. Clarify the client-counselor relationship
3. Define the client-counselor responsibilities

*Gathering Client Information

1. Who is the client?
   a. How does the client view self, others, and his or her world?
   b. What language does the client use to represent these views?
   c. What themes does the client use to organize and direct his or her behavior?
   d. Does the client make sense out of and have order in his or her world?

2. What are the client's current status and environment like?
   a. How does the client view and make sense our of his or her life roles, settings, and events, past, present and future?

   b. What personal and environmental barriers or constraints are operating?

   c. What decision (personal) styles are in place? Being used?

*Develop and agree on a Tentative Counseling Plan and Interventions

*Request Academic Audit and/or arrange for Career Assessment if appropriate

*Set Next Session - Tentative Counseling Plan

C. Assessment and Interpretation Program

The Handbook states that career counseling programs should offer formal vocational assessments in support of individual counseling. These assessments serve to facilitate positive client outcome by enhancing self-exploration and awareness. They also contribute to the identity of the center as a counseling-oriented student program which has the responsibility of assisting clients in the self-exploration of personal attributes such as interests, values and personality styles. The assessment of each client should be individualized based on client needs and developmental level. As the primary career counseling program the selection of appropriate assessment materials should be granted to the professional staff of the center. This policy supports the counseling focus of the center, recognizes the need of the staff to select those assessment tools that are most appropriate for the clients and enable the center to plan and measure outcomes of interventions and programs.

Traditional Assessment Tools

New Strong Campbell or CISS Test
Self Directed Search
Myers Briggs Type
Learning Style Inventory
Super's Value Scale
Genograms

Diagnostic Measures of career maturity, progress or satisfaction could be utilized to not only measure individual change but also for counseling program outcomes assessment.

Career Beliefs Inventory and Career Maturity Scale

Computer Based - The value of computer assisted Career Guidance systems and other computer career information systems should be explored. The Task of maintaining a current career library and of keeping up to date on the development of different career, employment opportunities, and trends is monumental.

D. Career Exploration Activities and Skill Development

One of the greatest hurdles and challenges to the staff is the development of career exploration skills and program activities. Clients need to gather information about majors and careers to integrate with their growing self-awareness. Generation X students frequently disdain the "tedious" process of doing research through the library. They want directories to point them to the right source.

Informational Interviewing - frequently provides those students with potential options a means of exploring through a version of taking an "oral history".

Experiential Learning - Collaboration with the Internship Center should assist students in locating these opportunities. The counselor can use discussions of these experiences to assist students in the evaluation of themselves and careers. Additionally, the counselors will encourage the participation in activities on campus and in community. A "Developmental Transcript" can be used to evaluate interest and skill growth.

E. Individual Career Plan

Each client will be encouraged to develop a career exploration action plan. Each step will serve as a bench mark on client's responsibility for the decision.

F. Career Decision Statement

Each client will be requested to document the major or career decision when made. This form will be maintained in the client file.

VII. Workshops to Support Career Decision Making

A. Career Assessment Groups

B. Faculty Requests on What do with major?

C. Career Exploration Fair

D. Other group requests

- MB Types
- Developmental Transcripts
- How to Make the Most of your Summer Vacation

E. Resident Hall Requests

VIII. Evaluation and Files

A. Generic Intake
- Demographics
- Client Concern
- Referral
- Assessment
- No Shows

B. Client Counseling Files - Confidential
- Intake Session
- Confidentiality Forms
- Sharing of Information Forms
- Assessment Results
- Copy of Client Plans
- Referral Notation
- Session Sheets

C. Diagnostic Test Results
- May be used to measure change.

D. Client Individual Planning Files

E. Satisfaction Surveys

SENIOR YEAR PROGRAM

I. Philosophy and Mission

The Senior Year Program consists of activates and interventions that assist graduating students with the transition into the next phase of their lives: employment / work or graduate study. Activities to assist their transition from role of student to that of contributing citizen should be offered. The Senior Year Program should not be confused with an employment service. It is based on developmental theory and assists in developing the skills to manage the transitions out of school.

II. Developmental Transitions

The primary developmental transitions are a culmination of those of Competency, identity, clarifying purpose, autonomy through interdependence and, hopefully, developing integrity.

Development of purpose involves an increasing level of clarity about what one wants to do or at least the next step in the process and the abilities to plan negotiate the required transitions. The Senior Year Program attempts to assist and enhance this level of maturity by:

1. **Helping students identify the next stage of their lives.**
2. **Providing workshops to develop the skills necessary for the transition to this next stage.**
3. **Provide the resources to create interfaces with the next stage.**
4. **Provide workshops to enhance success in post school roles.**

III. Outline of Major Senior Year Transition Concerns

A. Students entering their final semesters needing to choose the next stage/step after graduation.

1. **Students with 90 or more credits - entering final year.**

2. **Students who have registered for graduation - not contacted in A.**

B. Clients who need careering or recareering skills to manage life/career transitions or development. The extent and manner of assisting these clients will be periodically revisited in light of resources to ensure that current students receive priority. Additionally, there may be a need to request some sort of compensation.

1. Alumni/ae
   Recent graduates who didn't utilize the Senior Year Program during their last year.
   Past graduates who are changing careers or looking at continuing education.

2. Faculty/Staff
   Members of the university community needing Senior Year Workshops or Transition Skills to progress in their careers.

3. Community Members / Referrals
   Members of the community participating in Senior Year Workshops.

IV. Senior Year Programming Components

The activities and counseling provided to students in the Senior Year Program will vary according to the clarity of their directions, chosen future goals, and transition skills and abilities. Some students entering their final semesters have failed to achieve a level of "career maturity" in which they have the skills and abilities to acquire information about job opportunities and financial returns, to formulate career or further educational plans, and to reach a degree of certainty about their career choice. This is the "dreaded" time during which to test their abilities to successfully enter the "real world" and cope with the transition from student to active member of the community.

A. Create Awareness and Clarification of the Transition(s)

B. Post Graduation Employment Option
   Coordinate with College/ School Programs

C. Post Graduation Public Teaching Option
   Coordinate with Student Internship Program

D. Post Graduation Graduate School Option

E. Post Graduation Exploration/ Time Out Option

F. Activities in Support of Employment

Programs to Increase Student/Employer Interface

Fast Referral - Resume Forwarding
Job Line
Gopher Menu
Internship / Coop Extension or Conversion
Career Events

G. Activities in Support of Transitions (Future Components)

Leaving School
Financial Planning
Advancement in Career
Lifelong Learning
Family and Work Roles

V. Senior Year Program Process

A. Enter Process: Create Awareness

Students approaching graduation need to be made aware of the need to prepare for the transition out of undergraduate study. It is imperative that students develop the understanding that this transition involves preparation and an action plan.

Letter should be sent to all students during the semester break who have just completed 90 Credits.
Follow up letters to those who have not contacted the office based on Application for Graduation List.

Senior Year Program publicity through the Sagebrush at the beginning of each semester.

1. Current Graduates: Clarification and Decision -

What do with major - Refer to Counseling Pgm
Establish file.
Get Check list for exploring and planning options

a. Employment post Graduation.
Sign Up for Senior Yr. Program
Determine summer activities to avoid fall crunch.
Early participation in Senior Year Workshops

b. Graduate School Post Graduation
Sign Up for Senior Year Program
Watch Video on how to chose and apply to graduate school
Identify and get info on graduate schools.
Plan graduation School Application Process:
Test
Letters,
Evaluations

c. Teaching - Post Graduation
Sign up for Senior Year Program
Verify Teaching.

2. Alumni - Contact Office post graduation

a. Recent Graduates
Participate in Senior Year workshops
Utilize On campus Recruitment

b. Older or Past Graduates
Participate in Senior year Workshops
Refer to Counseling for Re-Careering
or Graduate School Option

3. Graduate Students- Through GSA?
What if Bach. Degree from other institution?
Industry: Senior Year Program
University Teaching:
Set up file
Evaluations
CV Preparation (not same as Resume)

B. Senior Year Experience: Program Components

The workshop components of the Senior Year Program may be offered in four possible ways:
Student Development Center (limited seating)
Capstone Classes (on request)
ASUN Programming
Full Day Event
Creation of a CEP (1 Credit) Class

1. **Students enrolling in the Senior Year Program will be required to sign a contract or complete a checklist which will be placed in their files. The contract will enable the student to commit to the program and monitor their participation. This will assist in the collection of utilization and satisfaction data.**

2. **Job Search Workshop**
   Create Plan of how to organize job search
   Plan in file with contract

3. **Research Industries.**
   Target potential employers
   International Careers

4. **Resume Workshop**
   Resume Critique (only those in workshop)

5. **Interview Workshop**
   Practice Interviews/mock interviews

6. **Salary Negotiation**

7. **Transition to Real World**
   How to fit in and get promoted
   Financial Planning
   Dual Career Issues

C. Senior Year Resources to Increase Interface with Opportunities

1. **Job-Line**

2. **Career Events**
   Career Fair
   Job Fairs

3. **Career Menu on Gopher and Other Electronic Career Information**

4. **Alumni Network**

5. **Career Library / Business Library**

6. **Graduate School Directories**
   Video on How to Apply

7. Fast Referral and Fast Referral Interviewing

In the Senior Year Program, additional adjustment will be made to programming beyond clustering the services with those of First Year Programs and Academic and Career Counseling. Examination of the on-campus interview program reveals the following trend:

1994 Spring Recruitment Season:

22 recruiting organizations

-6 cancellations (27%)

14 came to campus to recruit

Of those 14, 8 organizations had 1-5 students sign up;
7 organizations had more than 5 students.

1994 Fall Recruitment Season:

13 recruiting organizations (down 59% from spring)

8 cancellations (61%)

2 came to campus to recruit as of November 9, 1994

Of the 3 still scheduled to visit the campus, there was only 1 student signed up to interview.

This dramatic decline began in 1990 with the recession. As employers could no longer afford to visit smaller campuses, students became disheartened about the on-campus recruitment program. When fewer students signed up, the employers who had signed up to visit the campus cancelled. This reinforced the pattern of fewer employers leading to fewer students, leading to fewer employers. To balance this problem, the Senior Year Program will focus on two existing and very viable programs: Career and Job Fairs (where students and employers meet each semester), and Fast Referral (a proactive referral system).

Fast Referral will be marketed to the students as a required part of the Senior Year Program. They will provide a copy of their resume at the beginning of their last semester before graduation. Employers will be approached and invited to call with their personnel needs, no matter how small. Resumes

from students in the majors requested by the employer will be sent to the employer directly, who will then contact those students qualified. If an interview facility is needed by the employer to interview those students contacted, the office will assist with those logistics.

There are several advantages to this approach:

a. The Senior Year Program is less likely to be perceived as a placement office;

b. Students are is more likely to be interested in positions when they realize that the employer is recruiting them, and when they are able to hear directly from the employer about the job. This will result in students considering viable jobs they previously would eschew, such as retail.

c. The employer is more likely to consider students whose background did not perfectly fit their expectations, which could result in more students hired than through the prior system.

d. The student/employer contact is not contingent on serendipitous elements such as seeing posters or flyers. The student will be required to participate as a part of the Senior Year program.

e. Employer marketing would be more effective since all that is required on their part is a phone call to the Center. Organizations who cannot afford to send interviewers to the campus could take part in this process without any cost to them.

8. Education Placement File Service/ Professional Dossiers

A meeting has been scheduled with the dean of the College of Education to discuss the possible transfer of education placement files to that unit. A majority of universities that provide this almost-extinct service house education placement files in the college of education from which the student graduates. Furthermore, the philosophy of the new Senior Year programming is focused on campus-wide student service, rather than specialized services offered to only a limited number of students. With the establishment of the advisement center in the College, the personnel exists to service those files.

Professional dossiers maintained for the doctoral level graduate will be examined under the same philosophy outlined above.

D. Workshops for Groups Provided Outside Center

Some of the major methods of providing Senior Year Workshops are either presentations made in capstone classes or to various groups on the campus. These are frequently provided by the center in collaboration with the career or advisement centers in the individual colleges.

1. Job Search Skills
   - Resume
   - Interviews
   - Professional Presence

2. Education Students
   - Placement file
   - Resume
   - Interviews

3. Possible Senior Week Sign Up At JTSU
   Provide the series of Job Search Workshops within a compact two day or weekend program.

E. Public Relations of Program

The Senior Year Programs and events require planned public relations and advertising efforts. Successful participation by students and employers requires a special promotional effort.

VI. Administration of Senior Year Program

With the expansion of the counseling program to assist all students in successful academic and personal progress to graduation. The Senior Year Program will require a designated professional to plan and deliver the workshops, to work with the employment community in a more personal manner, to support the development and utilization of Gopher and JobLine Listing Services, and to administer the collection of utilization and evaluation data.